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SUBJECT: FARC LEADER'S MESSAGE TO GUERRILLAS

Classified By: Ambassador William B. Wood.  
Reasons: 1.4 (b) and (d)

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SUMMARY  
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¶1. (S) Poloff met with a military intelligence analyst who discreetly shared a secret communique sent in January to the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) from its Supreme Commander Pedro Antonio Marin, AKA "Manuel Marulanda" or "Tirofijo". (Please protect source and information.) The communique delineated the FARC's strategy for the 2006 electoral season. Marulanda told his forces that the FARC must prevent President Uribe's reelection; improve its propaganda efforts with COLMIL footsoldiers to weaken Uribe's military campaign; offer good treatment to the population to increase FARC support; improve discipline, training, and intelligence; apply lessons learned from "Plan Patriota"; have the most experienced operatives lead training and maintain ideological purity; send a warning to deserters and those who have drifted from the FARC; call on the government to open a "democratic process" to find a political solution to the conflict; take advantage of the "crises" in traditional parties to open political space for the guerrillas; back a candidate that supports a political solution to the conflict; and support leftist elements in neighboring countries. (Septel will analyze the FARC's electoral strategy.) End Summary.

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MARULANDA'S ELECTORAL STRATEGY MESSAGE  
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¶2. (S) FARC Supreme Commander and only surviving founder "Manuel Marulanda" sent a secret communique to his forces in early January outlining the organization's strategy for the 2006 congressional and presidential elections. The following is an unofficial translation that attempts to highlight the main points of Marulanda's meandering speech:

-- Prevent President Uribe's reelection.  
"If fascism is not defeated in the next electoral cycle we will have four more years of Uribe, therefore it is necessary to equip all fronts with mobile guerrilla war theory to hit

and run and then hit the enemy again without truce until he is exhausted, (while the guerrillas are) hidden within the civilian population, well-oriented and directed politically by the FARC."

-- Improve its propaganda efforts to weaken Uribe's military campaign.

"We must take full advantage of the discontent (within the population) and fight for the people's political, economic, and social rights, and if possible, get close to them through written and verbal means in order to weaken the military's potential or at least create insoluble internal discrepancies (within the military) for the good of the revolutionary process, taking into account the differences in salaries between the high-ranking military command and the salaries of the troops that suffer in the flesh the same consequences of the common folks."

-- Offer good treatment to the population to increase FARC support.

"Fraternal treatment of the masses...could lead (them) not believing in the military forces' victory against the guerrillas...and with the decomposition of (political) parties, new favorable conditions will arise for us."

-- Improve discipline, training, and intelligence.

"More discipline in training is required in camouflage, movement, reinforcement, and security measures in resting camps. Squads, guerrillas, companies, columns, tactical commands need more military knowledge and design of many types of tactical offense against small towns, villages, roads, military bases, and enemy troop displacements...intelligence in all types of actions is required without improvising so much."

-- Apply lessons from "Plan Patriota" and increase protection of arms and explosives.

"Several important lessons can be learned from (the FARC's) daily actions in the face of (Plan) Patriota, which if taken into account, are useful for the military teachings for commanders in the National School...with the objective of avoiding committing the same mistakes...we are obligated to take care of (arms and explosives) to prevent the enemy from taking them away."

-- Have the most experienced operatives lead training and maintain ideological purity.

"(The organization) needs to avoid false teachings or misinterpretations of the doctrine...there are several ambitious men that may have ascended according to their time served but lack knowledge, understanding, and experience to infuse the value of morale, conscience, discipline, and revolutionary faith over the principles of Marxism Leninism and they lack the strength in the long-term to resist confrontations with a combative and teamwork spirit. If we did not emphasize the importance of the leadership being in the hands of the most experienced at any moment they (younger leaders) would walk away with money and arms to the enemy..."

-- Send a warning to deserters and those who have drifted from the FARC's political ideology.

"Out of 100 trainees only 30 percent can manage (FARC) training because the rest cannot resist (the difficulties involved in it)...instead they decide to renounce the armed struggle and join leftist parties to channel their popular discontent with the innocent hope that in this manner they will be able to contribute to fundamental change in the country. We have information on the work the military and U.S. Embassy have been doing in educational centers and out in the field...to infiltrate the masses and buy off the people...surely the dead will increase because of the government's efforts since it has co-opted (these individuals) by paying them salaries. This same policy is probably being applied in some (FARC) blocs and fronts, therefore be careful because they can be causing us irreparable damage."

-- Call on the government to open a "democratic process" to

find a political solution to the conflict.

"It is important at this stage to demonstrate to the enemy that despite its desire to defeat the guerrilla militarily it is simply not possible...(the government) cannot forget that the only way to end an armed conflict is to open a democratic process with the people, which obligates its leaders to find political ways to diminish the internal conflict derived from a multitude of social causes without the involvement of foreign powers that deceive with their promises of contributing to peace in Colombia with its good offices."

-- Take advantage of the "crises" in traditional political parties to open political space for the guerrillas.

"The political circumstances are formidable for a political action from the armed movement and the Bolivarian movement given the political crisis of the liberal and conservative parties for the lack of leadership and democratic programs that favor the interests of the people, this is also found in the parties that represent the left, which lack a common strategy...this is all occurring in a moment when we are talking about an electoral campaign to defeat Uribe...we are at a moment that requires a great effort from us to organize and orient the masses at all levels to strengthen ourselves and find new spaces within organizations and democratic movements to avoid the reelection of Uribe and the spilling of more blood if he is not defeated at the polls...and if (Uribe) insists on imposing fascism, the situation for him will become complicated as he will face opposition at all levels from diverse groups."

-- Back a candidate that supports a political solution to the conflict.

"If a candidate emerges that has a broad democratic coalition, is committed beyond his personal interests, supports a political solution to the social and armed conflict, and at a minimum shares a common defense against the paramilitaries' sovereignty...the Secretariat will take into account the opportune moment to indicate the chosen candidate in order to help orient the masses correctly in the support for this individual."

-- Support other leftist sympathizers in neighboring countries.

"FARC leadership is not only responsible to fight in Colombia and help produce important changes, but also with its experience and knowledge assist popular leaders and masses in neighboring countries to help the progress that has been developing throughout the continent. By supporting small communist parties and leaders of the Bolivarian Continental Coordinator we can work in this direction without the interference in internal matters, however, (these governments) are united with us."

WOOD